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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2617
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [PAC](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE: FORMAL
RESPONSE RECEIVED

REF: A. 07 STATE 181912
[1](#)B. 07 PARIS 3630

[1](#)1. (U) Sensitive but Unclassified - not for internet
distribution.

[1](#)2. (SBU) On April 7, the diplomatic advisor to Defense
Minister Morin, Frederic Mondoloni, sent a letter to the
Political Minister-Counselor to respond formally to the
November 2006 USG request for a Status of Forces Agreement
(SOFA) to cover U.S. forces engaged in exercises or training
in France's overseas departments in the Americas. A rough
translation of the letter follows; the original will be
pouched to the Department.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Translation of the letter - Begin text

(Date) April 7, 2008

From the Minister's Cabinet

Dear Sir:

At the end of 2006, your Embassy expressed the desire to
negotiate an agreement to cover the status of armed American
forces sent to France's overseas departments and communities
for the purpose of exercises or training.

The contents of this request, that I have reproduced in an
annex, were the subject of a profound analysis by our legal
services. It appeared that some of the privileges and
exemptions that you are requesting depart significantly from
normal practices usually included in this type of agreement.
It therefore appears to us to be important, before engaging
in a long and complex negotiating process due to the great
variety of questions to be treated, to define more clearly
your operational objectives. This would allow us to achieve,
in the shortest time possible, an effective mechanism adapted
to your needs.

Therefore, I propose that your experts make contact with Mr.
Fabrice Leggeri, sous-director (DAS-equivalent) in
international and european law, in our legal affairs section,
to set up a meeting. He can be reached at telephone:
01-42-19-40-69.

I offer you the assurance of my distinguished consideration.

Sincerely

Frederic Mondoloni
Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister

End text.

14. (SBU) Comment: This response conforms to what we were told informally (ref b) last year; namely, that the GOF legal experts believe that the scope of exceptions and privileges contained in the standard SOFA that we provided in our initial demarche go beyond those accorded by France to other nations. However, the offer to have our legal experts confer on a compromise agreement is new and the Embassy will be happy to support a meeting with the MOD legal expert named in the letter, should a legal team from the U.S. decide to travel to Paris to pursue this in the future. End comment.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

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